GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION
LOK SABHA

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Contaminated Drinking Water
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Will the Minister of DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether hazardous chemicals including arsenic and fluoride have been found in excessive quantity in drinking water in various parts of the country, if so, the location/habitation wise details thereof, State/UT-wise;
(b) the number and percentage of habitations/households reported to be affected therefrom along with the remedial steps taken/being taken by the Government in this regard, State/UT-wise during the last three years and the current year and the time by which all these habitations are likely to be provided with safe drinking water;
(c) the financial and technical assistance provided by the Government to improve the quality of water and to continuously monitor the same during the above period, State/UT-wise and;
(d) the details of diseases caused due to consumption of these chemicals in excessive quantity and the steps taken to check the contamination of drinking water?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE
IN THE MINISTRY OF DRINKING WATER & SANITATION
(SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV)

(a) & (b) The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation monitors primarily five major chemical contamination viz., arsenic, fluoride, iron, salinity and nitrate in rural drinking water sources, which are fairly widespread across the country. Further, the Ministry has also started monitoring emerging chemical contaminants like heavy /toxic metals including uranium in the rural drinking water sources in the country. This data on heavy and toxic metals is reported by the State Government from their laboratory records. The number of rural habitations affected with arsenic, fluoride, iron, salinity and nitrate in one or more drinking water sources along with the rural population, which are yet to be provided safe drinking water as on 1/4/2013, 1/4/2014, 1/4/2015 and 1/4/2016 (provisional) as reported by the State Governments into the online Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) of the Ministry is at Annexure-I, II, III and IV respectively. The number of heavy and toxic metals reported from laboratory records during the last 3 years and during 2015-16 (provisional) is at Annexure-V, VI, VII and VIII respectively, as reported by the State Governments into the online IMIS of the Ministry. The Ministry has accorded highest priority to tackle arsenic and fluoride affected habitations and, has advised all the States to tackle all reported arsenic and fluoride affected habitations by installation of Community Water Purification plants by March 2017 (short term solution to provide 8-10 lpcd of safe water for drinking and cooking purpose only) and by providing piped water supply schemes preferably based on surface water (long term and most sustainable solution) subject to availability of funds. In this regard, NITI Aayog, Government of India has provided Rs 800 crore for installation of community water purification plants in all remaining arsenic and fluoride affected 19 States. In addition, NITI Aayog has also provided Rs 100 crore each to Rajasthan and West Bengal for last mile connectivity of piped water supply schemes in fluoride and arsenic affected habitations respectively.
(c) The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Government of India assists the State Governments technically and financially for supplying safe drinking water in adequate quantity to the rural population of the country through the centrally sponsored National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP). The State/UT-wise allocation and release made to the States under NRDWP during the last 3 years and 2015-16 is at Annexure-IX. The Ministry has also published and circulated Uniform Drinking Water Quality Monitoring Protocol, Handbook on Drinking Water Treatment Technologies, Operation & Maintenance Manual, and Manual on Artificial ground water recharge to the States as part of technical assistance.
(d) Prolonged consumption of excess arsenic in drinking water may lead to diseases such as keratosis and melanosis; prolonged consumption of fluoride in drinking water may lead to dental, skeletal and non-skeletal fluorosis; prolonged consumption of excess nitrate in drinking water may lead to methaemoglobinemia (blue baby syndrome) especially in infants. Excess iron and salinity in drinking water are not palatable for human consumption beyond a threshold limit. For monitoring drinking water quality using simple field test kits, upto 5 grass root workers in each Gram Panchayat are trained in using Chemical Filed Test Kits (FTK) and Bacteriological vials for testing the quality of water in their jurisdiction for major chemical and bacteriological parameters. Since inception of the Water Quality Monitoring and Surveillance Programme in 2006 and till 22/04/2016, a total of 33.21 lakh people have been trained for using chemical field test kits and bacteriological vials to test their local drinking water sources, which include 29.52 grass root people in the Gram Panchayats of the Country. As reported into the online IMIS by the States, during 2015-016, 10.56 lakh water sources have been tested using field test kits and 1.56 lakh sources have been reported contaminated. Further, as reported into the online IMIS by the States, during 2015-016, 37.91 lakh drinking water samples have been tested in 2223 laboratories.

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